

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Amendment to the Specification:

The specification has been amended based on the objections to the specification made on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action (as well as other minor informalities found by Applicant's representative). Please note that "laid-open" has been changed "published", to more clearly describe this term.

Status of Claims:

Claims 1-3 and 6-9 are currently being canceled.

Claims 4 and 5 are currently being amended.

Claim 10 is currently being added.

This amendment adds, cancels and amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 4, 5 and 10 are now pending in this application.

Claim Objections:

In the Office Action, claims 2-9 were objected to because of minor informalities noted in the Office Action. Claims 2, 3 and 6-9 have been canceled, thereby mooting the objections of those claims. Claims 4 and 5 have been amended in accordance with the suggestions made on page 3 of the Office Action, whereby it is submitted that presently pending claims 4 and 5 are unobjectionable.

Claim Rejections – Indefinite

In the Office Action, claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for the reasons set forth on page 4 of the Office Action.

Claims 1-3 have been canceled, thereby mooting the indefiniteness rejection of those claims. Please note that presently pending claim 4 has been amended to change "can be recognized" to "is recognizable" (even though claim 4 was not rejected as being indefinite).

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1-5 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,995,105 to Reber et al. (Reber et al. '105); and claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reber et al. '105 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,081,827 to Reber et al. (Reber et al. '827). The rejection of claims 1-5 and 7-9 is now moot due to the cancellation claims 1-3 and 7-9. The rejection of claim 4 (and also its dependent claim 5), whereby claim 4 now includes the features of now-canceled claim 6, is traversed for at least the reasons given below.

As recognized in the Office Action in its rejection of claim 4, Reber et al. '105 does not explicitly disclose the graphic pattern read coincides with a graphic pattern that is stored in advance in a storing part of a terminal unit. However, the Office Action incorrectly asserts that Reber et al. '827 discloses these features. Claim 4 has been amended to more explicitly recite these features, so as to more clearly distinguish over the disclosure of Reber et al. '105 and Reber et al. '827. In particular, a plurality of service servers are provided, whereby the terminal unit makes a unique link to one of the service servers based on a pattern recognition performed on an exclusive graphic pattern that is a part of a service identification tag. The terminal unit includes a data storing part and an identification reading means, wherein, only after the terminal unit has initially contacted one of the service servers (corresponding to the pattern-recognized service mark), does the terminal unit convert the identification code portion of the service identification tag to text code and output the text code to the one of the service servers, in order to request URL information of one of the information transmission servers corresponding to the service mark.

Reber et al. '827 merely describes that an article of mail has a bar code that can be scanned to obtain machine-readable data, in which a signal representative of the machine-readable data can be sent to a network access apparatus. See column 5, lines 28-43 of Reber et al. '827. The usage of a plurality of service servers in which one of the service servers is accessed based on pattern recognition of a service mark portion of a service identification tag, and in which the terminal unit only converts an identification code portion of the service identification tag after having contacted the one of the service servers corresponding to the pattern-recognized service mark portion, is not disclosed or suggested by Reber et al. '105 or by Reber et al. '827, alone or in combination.

Accordingly, presently pending independent claim 4 is patentable over the cited art of record.

Dependent claim 5 has been amended to recite that the terminal unit makes a link to said one of said information transmission servers located at the URL received from said one of said service server servers after disconnecting the link to said one of said service servers. Such features are not taught or suggested by the cited art of record, and thus claim 5 provides a separate basis for patentability of that claim, beyond those discussed above with respect to its base claim 4.

New claim 10 has been added, which recites that the terminal unit includes a graphic data storage unit for storing a plurality of graphics data respectively corresponding to a plurality of service marks, and a plurality of telephone numbers respectively corresponding to said plurality of service servers that store URL information for accessing at least one of said plurality of information transmission servers. Such features provide a separate basis for patentability of claim 10, beyond those discussed above with respect to its base claim 4.

Conclusion:

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 672-5300
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Phillip J. Artigola
Phillip J. Artigola
Registration No. 38,819